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facts, it might still be possible to write the history of the earliest "Society for Ethical Culture," and to show how much we owe to it.

In this connection, I may perhaps be allowed to call attention to a recent discovery, which bears upon the subject in hand. Last year there was found at Civita, near Pompeii, a well preserved mosaic, representing a meeting of the heads of the Greek philosophic schools.* The scene of the meeting is a garden, with a portico (*στοά*), a tree, a sundial, and an exedra, and with an acropolis—doubtless, that of Athens—in the distance. There are, in all, seven philosophers. Four of them are seated on the exedra,—one on the back, with his feet on the seat; three are standing, one at each end, and one behind the middle of the exedra. Beginning at the left of the spectator, they are arranged in this order: (1) Zeno, the Stoic, *standing*, with crown and Jewish features, by the stoa; (2) Aristotle, *sitting*, with bald head, and in his hand a roll (Zeno's left hand rests on his shoulder); (3) Pythagoras, *sitting* and pointing with a rod to a celestial sphere, placed on the ground before him; (4) Epicurus, *standing* under the tree; (5) Plato, *sitting* on the back of the exedra and in front of the sundial; (6) Socrates, *sitting*, with very plain features; (7) probably, though not certainly, Pyrrho, *standing*, or, rather, walking off. Thus, we have the heads of the Stoic, Peripatetic, Pythagorean, Epicurean, Academic, Socratic, and Skeptic schools. What interests us here is the important place assigned to Pythagoras even in Roman times. Pythagoras and Plato, Socrates and Aristotle, are seated, a sure sign of distinction. But the first two hold the central position, and Plato is elevated above all the rest. This seems to imply that he holds the first place and Pythagoras the second,—an intelligible enough estimate.

THOMAS DAVIDSON.

NEW YORK.

THE RELIGION OF BABYLONIA AND ASSYRIA. By Morris Jastrow, Jr., Ph.D. (Leipzig), Professor of Semitic Languages in the University of Pennsylvania. Boston: Ginn & Company, 1898. Large 16mo. Pp. xii, 780.

In this volume (the second in the series, edited by Dr. Jastrow, entitled "Handbooks on the History of Religions") Professor Jas-

* *Ein jüngst bei Pompeii freigelegtes Mosaikbild der "Schule von Athen."* Von Alessandro Chiappelli in Neapel und Ludwig Stein in Bern. Sonderabdruck aus dem *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, Bd. xi., Heft ii.

trow has given us the first real history of the old cults of the Tigris-Euphrates valley. Of former books on the subject some are inadequate by reason of the paucity of materials at the author's command, some go over only a part of the field, and some are lacking in accuracy and sound judgment. The material has of late increased enormously, and the value of this old faith for the history of religion, especially of Semitic religion (including the Hebrew), has become apparent. There are still regrettable gaps (as our author observes), and many points on which opinions will be modified, but enough is known to enable the student to form an intelligent conception of the religion, and Dr. Jastrow has done the science of religion a great service in collecting and expounding the existing material. His reading embraces all of value that has been written on the subject, and to the criticism of the facts he brings the knowledge of an Assyriologist and the training of a student of general religious history. What we desire to know of an old cult is the religious life of the people: the attitude of the man towards the supernatural powers, the origin and the ethical character of the deities, the customs and institutions in which religion expressed itself, and the influence of the religious faith on the moral life of men. Suggestive discussions of all these points will be found in the present volume, the larger part of which is devoted to the consideration of incantations, prayers and hymns, oracles and omens, festivals and burial-customs, mythic and legendary poetry, the ritual of the temples, and the constitution of the Underworld; the pantheon is, of course, treated at length. Special attention may be called to Dr. Jastrow's ingenious and suggestive analysis of the Gilgamesh epic (which includes the story of the flood) and the great cosmogonic poem, and to his consistent chronological treatment of ideas and persons. Regarding the history as an evolution, he undertakes to show how the functions and characters of gods and priests and the religious conceptions of leading minds have grown with the growth of society. As the Babylonian religion (of which the Assyrian was little more than a copy) contains material of all grades, from animism and zoolatry to something approaching ethical monotheism, it offers an excellent opportunity for the study of the genesis and development of the most important religious ideas, and for such study this volume furnishes abundant material. The biography of the goddess Ishtar (Astarte) might make a book in itself: beginning as a deity of the soil, the creator of productiveness, she ends by ascending to

heaven, and becoming the embodiment and the source of all that is morally pure and strong. Other deities, as, for example, Marduk and Nergal, undergo similar transformations. An interesting fact in the Babylonian-Assyrian religious history is the part taken by learned men, who edited old documents and modified old beliefs in the interest of later and more rational ideas; similar tasks were undertaken by the Hebrew priests and prophets and the Greek poets and philosophers.

The close resemblances between the Babylonian and Hebrew religions are taken by Dr. Jastrow to show that the two were originally one, and that the Hebrews brought with them, in their migration from Mesopotamia to the West, a large part of the traditions which they, at a later period and in modified form, included in their national literature. Would the Babylonian religion have reached a pure monotheism if its existence had been prolonged? It is impossible to say. It was cut off untimely, and it was handicapped by a great pantheon; but it would appear that Nebuchadrezzar was substantially a monotheist. The ethical developments of the two religions do not differ materially. So far as the ethical code is concerned, it was taken, here as in all cases, by religion from society, and the moral standard of Nineveh and Babylon probably did not differ from that of Jerusalem (though the Hebrew prophets paint the latter in darkest colors). The sense of sin expressed in the Babylonian penitential liturgies is commonly compared with that which we find in the Hebrew psalms. Dr. Jastrow remarks of the former that it is rather a sense of the deity's displeasure than sorrow for offence against the moral law, and the same remark must be made of a great part of the Hebrew psalter, though some late psalms rise to a higher plane.

Dr. Jastrow's volume cannot fail to be intensely interesting to all who care to study the history of ancient religions. He has collected an immense mass of material, which he handles with marked ability. His tone is fair and judicial, and he has the gift of clear and fresh exposition. At the end of the book are added an index and an extensive bibliography.

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THE STATE AND CHARITY. By Thomas Mackay. London: Macmillan & Co., 1898.

That the aim of charity is not to alleviate distress, but to cure it, is the key-note of this book. The only effective charity is that